

REMARKS

A restriction under 35 U.S.C. 121 has been made to one of the following inventions for the purposes of examination:

Group I. Claims 1-3 and 7-19, drawn to an insulation blanket packaging machine; and

Group II. Claims 4-6 and 20-24, drawn to a method of packaging insulation blankets.

Applicants hereby confirm the election of Group I without traverse.

Of the claims in elected Group I, claims 1-3, 7-9, and 11-14 have been rejected and claims 10 and 15-19 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim. Claims 10 and 15-19 have been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 7 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 10. Accordingly, claim 7 and the remaining claims dependent on claim 7 (claims 8 and 11 to 14) should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim 15 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 7 from which it directly depended. Accordingly, claim 15, as amended, together with dependent claims 16 and 17 should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 7 from which it directly depended. Accordingly, claim 18, as amended, together with dependent claim 19 should now be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-3, 7-9, and 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Allwein (4,805,383) in view of Terry (3,837,138). Due to the amendment of claim 7 to include the limitations of claim 10, the cancellation of claims 9 and 10, and the dependence of claims 8 and 11 to 14 from claim 7, the rejection now applies to claims 1-3.

Allwein discloses a batt-packaging machine wherein batts are elevated from a loading station (12, 14, and 16) into a tower 18 where the batts are stacked. The stack of batts is then pushed back down from the tower 18 through the loading station (12, 14, and 16) by the compression plate 25 to be packaged. While the batts are being passed back down through the loading station (12, 14, and 16) and being packaged at a location beneath the loading station, the presence of the compression plate 25 beneath the

loading station prevents batts from being load into the tower 18. The compression plate 25 must be retracted back up into the tower 18 before batts can again be loaded into the tower 18. This halt in the packaging process reduces the productivity of the packaging Allwein machine.

Terry discloses an apparatus for compressing material wherein the material is fed horizontally into converging conveyors to be compressed by the converging conveyors.

The insulation blanket-packaging machine of the subject invention, as set forth in amended claim 1 includes: an insulation blanket loading station for successively receiving compressible insulation blankets; an insulation blanket transfer station for successively receiving insulation blankets from the insulation blanket loading station and vertically transferring the insulation blankets from the insulation blanket loading station to an insulation blanket compression station; and vertical insulation blanket moving means for successively engaging and elevating groupings of one or more insulation blankets at a time in a generally vertical direction from the insulation blanket loading station up through the insulation blanket transfer station into the insulation blanket compression station while simultaneously permitting insulation blankets to be fed into the loading station.

The insulation blanket compression station includes upper and lower compression conveyors for successively receiving there between the groupings of one or more insulation blankets moved from the insulation blanket loading station through the insulation blanket transfer station into the insulation blanket compression station by the vertical insulation blanket moving means. The upper and lower compression conveyors are movable relative to each other for successively compressing each grouping of one or more insulation blankets located intermediate the upper and lower compression conveyors to successively form groupings of one or more compressed insulation blankets and the upper and lower compression conveyors are operable to successively move each grouping of one or more compressed insulation blankets from the insulation blanket compression station into an insulation blanket packaging station where the compressed insulation blankets are enveloped within sheet material to form packages.

Thus, unlike the batt packaging machine of Allwein where batts can not be loaded into the loading station (12, 14 and 16) and elevated into tower 18 while the compression plate 25 is moving batts into the packaging station below the loading station (12, 14 and 16) and is located in the packaging station during the packaging

operation, with the insulation blanket packaging machine of the subject invention insulation blankets can be fed into the blanket loading station while the vertical insulation blanket moving means is elevating a grouping of one or more insulation blankets to the insulation blanket compression station without having to wait for the vertical insulation blanket moving means to return to the loading station. Terry discloses nothing to supplement the disclosure of Allwein in this respect.

In view of the amendments to claim 1 and for the reasons set forth above, the withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2 and 3 as unpatentable over Allwein in view of Terry is solicited and the allowance of claims 1 to 3 is requested.

Claims 2 and 3 have been further amended to define the vertical insulation blanket moving means of the subject invention in more detail. The vertical insulation blanket moving means set forth in claims 2 and 3 has reciprocating insulation blanket supporting and elevating means that reciprocates from a retracted position to an extended position in the insulation blanket loading station for successively engaging and elevating groupings of one or more insulation blankets from the insulation blanket loading station through the insulation blanket transfer station into the insulation blanket compression station and back to the retracted position, while in the insulation blanket compression station, with the reciprocating insulation blanket supporting and elevating means being retracted as the lower compression conveyor of the insulation blanket compression station advances to successively transfer the groupings of one or more insulation blankets from the reciprocating insulation blanket support and elevating means to the lower compression conveyor of the insulation blanket compression station for the successive compression of the groupings of one or more insulation blankets in the compression station.

Neither Allwein nor Terry disclose or suggest a packaging machine wherein vertical insulation blanket moving means has reciprocating insulation blanket supporting and elevating means that reciprocates from a retracted position to an extended position in the insulation blanket loading station for successively engaging and elevating groupings of one or more insulation blankets from the insulation blanket loading station through the insulation blanket transfer station into the insulation blanket compression station and back to the retracted position, while in the insulation blanket compression station, with the reciprocating insulation blanket supporting and elevating means being retracted as the lower compression conveyor of the insulation blanket compression

station advances to successively transfer the groupings of one or more insulation blankets from the reciprocating insulation blanket support and elevating means to the lower compression conveyor of the insulation blanket compression station for the successive compression of the groupings of one or more insulation blankets in the compression station.

In view of the amendments to claims 2 and 3 and for the reasons set forth above, the withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 2 and 3 as unpatentable over Allwein in view of Terry is solicited and the allowance of claims 2 and 3 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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